

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 1 and 9-11 are allowable and that claims 3-4 and 13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1-2 and 4-12 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 9 and 12 are independent. By the foregoing Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 2, 4, and 12, and have canceled claims 3 and 13. It is believed that these changes introduce no new matter and their entry is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 2, 7-8, and 12 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 2, 7-8, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,426,641 to Afrashteh et al. (hereinafter "Afrashteh"). A claim is anticipated only if each and every element of the claim is found in a reference. (MPEP §2131 *citing Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628 (Fed. Cir. 1987)). The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the claim. *Id. citing Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236 (Fed. Cir. 1989)). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Although Applicants believe claim 2 to be patentable as written, Applicants have amended claim 2 to incorporate the subject matter of claim 3, which the Examiner indicated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 2 should now be in condition for allowance. Claims 7-8 properly depend from claim 2 and thus also should be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and remove the rejection to claims 2 and 7-8.

Rejection of Claims 5-6 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 5-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Afrashteh in view of U.S. Patent Publication No.2002/0196086 to Sowalti (hereinafter "Sowalti"). To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, an Examiner must show

three things: (1) that there is some suggestion or motivation to modify a reference or combine reference teachings to arrive at the claimed invention, (2) that there must be a reasonable expectation of success, and (3) that the references teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. MPEP §2143. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

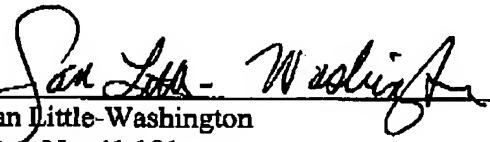
Claims 5-6 properly depend from claim 2 and thus also should be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and remove the rejection to claims 5-6.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that all grounds for rejection have been properly traversed or accommodated, and that the application is in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned representative if the Examiner believes that an interview might be useful for any reason.

Respectfully submitted,
BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN

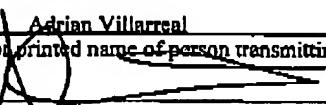
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4735.P004
Serial No. 10/600,043

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Examiner: Shingleton, Michael B.
Art Unit: 2817